

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATEWIDE ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5**

**September 26, 2006
9:30 a.m. – 12 noon**

ATTENDING:

Mike Kondelis, ADOT - Kingman District	John Harper, ADOT - Flagstaff District
Chuck Gillick, ADOT - N. Region Traffic (call-in)	Mike Manthey, ADOT – Traffic
Daniel Williams, ADOT - Tucson District	Arnold Burnham, ADOT – TPD
Dave Edwards, ADOT - Right-of-Way	Bryan Perry, Attorney General's Office/Transportation
Paul O'Brien, ADOT - PreDesign	Bob Hazlett, MAG
Reza Karimvand, ADOT - Baja Region Traffic	Andy Smith, Pinal County
Donna Jones, ADOT - Permits	Bob Miller, ADOT – SPM
Sylvia Hanna, ADOT - Permits	

ALSO ATTENDING:

Donald Freeman, PAG

Consultants: Rick Ensdruff - URS, Phil Demosthenes - Parametrix, Caraly Foreman - URS, Connie Denk - URS, Mike Connor - HDR, Preston Kessinger - HDR.

NOT ATTENDING: Reed Henry, ADOT - Traffic; Cherie Campbell, PAG; Chris Fetzer, NACOG; Jeff Martin – City of Mesa, Dale Buskirk, ADOT – TPD; Sam Elters, ADOT – State Engineer; Luana Capponi, ASLD, Manish Patel, ASLD; Ken Davis, FHWA; Matt Burdick, ADOT – CCP; Grant Buma, Colorado River Indian Tribe; Paul Melcher, YMPO; John Liosatos, PAG; Cheyenne Walsh, League of Cities and Towns; Mary Viparina, ADOT – VPM; Sally Stewart, ADOT – CCP; Julie Decker – BLM

MEETING NOTES:

Arnold Burnham called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for coming.

Rick Ensdruff took time to review the agenda, which included: Project Progress; Access Classification Assignment Activities Progress; Access Design Practices; Program Framework; ADOT CCP Outreach Plans and Activities; and Next Steps.

Rick Ensdruff added that this meeting would involve in-depth, detailed information about the classification system. He began that we will be getting into more details of the project - getting into developing the heart of the program. He further mentioned that, since the last TAC meeting, it was determined to eliminate the classification RC (rural collector), that there was “no real place for that classification. He noted the Framework and how this is all going to work. Rick Ensdruff then introduced Vergil Stover as a national expert on Access Management, co-author of *TRB Manual* and *AASHTO Green Book on Access Management*. Rick Ensdruff also stated that Vergil Stover has taught Access Management for 16 years, working for several Department of Transportations around the country on design guidelines.

Rick Ensdruff then updated the group on project progress and how we are working on outreach across the State. For example, progress is being made to brief elected officials at CYMPO, letting them know about projects, program status and the next steps. He mentioned that they seemed, by their responses and lack of

questions, to know a lot about Access Management. We met with Intertribal Council (ITC) a couple weeks ago, providing them with a briefing. They had lots of feedback, especially in regards to relationships and in facilitating access management issue discussions and working with tribes throughout the State.

Rick Ensдорff stated that HDR has been assisting with the completion of the photo log/access classification assignment activities for each district. Five to six are done with the rest to be completed within the next few weeks. Rick Ensдорff asked John Harper of the Flagstaff District and Mike Kondelis of the Kingman District for feedback. Mike Kondelis stated that it was a good process and the difficulty will be how to get from today into the future. John Harper mentioned the real test will be if local agencies agree with how we classified.

Rick Ensдорff proceeded to explain that the next step will be local review, especially from the land use side. Where Access Management really needs to be refined is in urban land use mixed areas. The goal is to have all of the ADOT District classification category assignment reviews done by Thanksgiving and then to move forward to next steps.

Phil Demosthenes showed slides of Kingman District map, Flagstaff District map, and the Proposed Categories slide. There are some segments that are not so easily categorized, that seem to fit RC (rural collector) but could be addressed under RB (rural secondary) so have found the RB category to be the good choice on those ones. Phil Demosthenes explained a little bit about why we could eliminate RC.

Mike Kondelis inquired if there has been any more discussion with FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) on the categories, i.e., their system versus our Access Management system. Phil Demosthenes replied that he has worked with FHWA on past federal highway projects and will also do so on this one. In relation to past similar projects and discussions with FHWA, the only issue ever brought up by FHWA Staff was the National Highway System (NHS) relationship to the access categories.

The next area discussed was Design Practices. Phil Demosthenes stated that we are working toward a comprehensive Access Management Design Standards Manual. Filling out the Design portion of the Manual will be Phil Demosthenes and Vergil Stover's role for the next 60-90 days. Processing of access requests has two criteria – first, the access category. Is direct access allowed? Secondly, the design elements. If someone applies for access, what would Arizona require? The vision is that Access Management elements will be put into regulations. The developed manual will be an operating program tool/resource, instead of just a guide. Arizona needs a manual that says how and why. The rules say you have to and the manual says why. It provides you with a really strong position when requiring design standards if you have a manual.

The next two slides involved the location and design standards. How do you qualify for an exception? Create a window that has standards if there's a necessity to get some variation. You have to qualify for it and have to work at complying with it. Dave Edwards brought up a brief discussion about design deviations versus design exceptions. Reza Karimvand stated that we don't want to go below minimum number two. That is very closely tied to development and the issue of exception comes up. If following the manual, it's a regulation. Don Freeman questioned that if the seriousness of exception is so extreme, where does the denial role come in? Phil Demosthenes explained that if there's no safe way of providing access, then three things happen. First, there's a need to pull in a bigger picture scenario. Secondly, look at how this happened. Thirdly, have a litmus test of if it would be defensible in court. Worst case scenario, if we can win in court then use existing regulation. If not, fix it. Bryan Perry stated that a judge most likely would not require us to provide a driveway. Phil Demosthenes mentioned it's beneficial to help the judge solve the problem to get a safer access.

The Access Design Elements slide was discussed, including the type, width, and shape of the driveways. Phil Demosthenes then introduced the Design Practices slide: formulating an initial draft set of recommended

design standards, include the rationale for each element, and work with an internal technical design group. Vergil Stover began by stating that 17 states have an Access Management plan. Of the 33 states left, about half have serious interest in Access Management. The rest have some interest but are not pursuing one at this time. Vergil Stover proceeded to discuss three sets of groups in relation to Access Management. He then discussed auxiliary lanes – warrant, driveway spacing, deviations from Access Management standards, and median openings. Regarding definitions, he suggested using deviation when departing from Access Management practices and exception when deviating from design manual. Paul O'Brien recommended ADOT follow AASHTO terminology. Vergil Stover recommended comparing TRB Access Management Manual to our Roadway Standards manual. Robert Miller asked, "Shouldn't there be Access Management standards versus roadway design manual? It would be difficult if ours and theirs differ, to develop ours, correct?" Phil Demosthenes replied that he has found from his experience that they would not disagree; they can have different purposes. Robert Miller commented that the criteria should be the same, and gave an example of a turnout. Phil Demosthenes explained the differences regarding if it was a new turnout versus reconstruction. If it is an existing access, you do not have to meet standards if improving and having a new permit issued. He noted that this issue will come up frequently.

Vergil Stover gave examples of where this has come up, for example deceleration lanes. In Texas, they replaced a revised section of the design manual. In Oregon they spent a great deal of time on how Access Management affects the Roadway Design Manual. We will look at how this Access Management manual compares with ADOT's existing Roadway Design Standards Manual. He named various resources we will be utilizing, (TRB, etc.) to provide a rationale background for Access Management design practices.

Phil Demosthenes described slides providing samples of acceleration lanes, turning ramp lane, etc. He states that there is a capacity issue. Reza, in regards to right and left acceleration lanes, saw that element in Colorado and thinks they will go away. In talking to CDOT, they did not recommend left acceleration lanes as safe, as it applies to Colorado. Phil Demosthenes said, "We have them in Arizona. They are called twiddles." He suspected they will be around for a while, especially in rural areas, but will be on the table of District discussions.

Daniel Williams asked, "Is it going to address lane width, reduction of lane width?" Phil Demosthenes replied that if it was an important issue then they could address it. Bob Hazlett stated that regarding Colorado, in the express category relating to right and left acceleration, categories are still being built and not going away. Maybe on some on express category routes, but agrees with Phil (Demosthenes). Based on his knowledge of what CDOT is doing, he sees continuance. Phil Demosthenes mentioned they will see what fits/doesn't fit as they develop the manual together.

In regards to other design issues and how complex some of these issues are, Phil Demosthenes gave an example of cattle guard crossings in Holbrook, etc. Then he went through the slides of examples of design element details. Mike Manthey pointed out that some left turn deceleration lanes may be short, but better than none at all. Phil Demosthenes discussed US 60 or US 93. Regarding Carefree Highway west of I-17 before US 60, he noted how one change will affect, back everyone else up and create a safety hazard. Also discussed were isolated LH turns and Tucson deceleration lanes with bike accommodation.

Next topic of discussion was the slides regarding reasons for using deceleration lanes. Phil Demosthenes gave an example of a horizontal curve to the right where intersection requested. Noting safety hazards of tapers, there were 2 fatalities in Colorado where people were drifting into right turn lanes and people pulled out thinking they were turning. This is solved by doing quick reverse curves. The type of slide "Schematic Illustration of a 10 mph Speed Differential" will be included in the manual to assist in explaining the "why" of the design standards rules and regulations. Additional types of these slides can also be used in developing

requirements for Access Management classification in category assignments (i.e. can be tied to Access Management categories). Function, tolerance for failure, capacity/volume, etc. are factors that can help explain in the manual why categories are assigned to a highway segment.

The Driveway Design slides were discussed specifically pointing out the curb cut, dustpan flare, and noted how it can mean pedestrian conflicts. Phil Demosthenes stated how illustrations, photos, and sample AutoCAD templates provided in the manual will greatly assist in specific design needs.

When viewing the Access Location & Design slide, Reza Karimvand stated that sometimes issues arise near a bridge regarding adjusting the speed limit. Phil Demosthenes suggested that they are trying to save money in their design by lowering the speed limit, but that you can put rules in the manual whether or not to allow speed limit changes.

In discussing the slide on Signal Spacing, Phil Demosthenes gave an example of 1 mile and ½ mile spacing between signals. Chuck Gillick reported that in some of our smaller rural communities the trend is thinking that the more signals, the better. Phil Demosthenes noted that there is some great information out there about signals and showed the slide stating that the more signals there are, the more unsafe it is and we need to minimize them to maximize service. Reza inquired about the source of this data because he would like to use it. Vergil Stover replied that he would have to look for it because he didn't have that information with him. Phil Demosthenes commented that it is important to look at the sources of studies and the relevance, example of old dates, locations, etc. He will provide sources with these graphics for the design manual.

The Medians and Design Admin & Process slides were addressed next. Phil Demosthenes talked about how there will be design guides for the landscaping in the medians regarding how big tree trunks can be, etc.

Paul O'Brien offered to help us write up comments and answer questions related to the exceptions/variances sections.

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The Program Framework slide was discussed next. Phil Demosthenes emphasized the importance of having a clearly identified person with a structured program in place at headquarters to provide keeping it together and cohesive. Daniel Williams stressed the importance of involving environmental staff for addressing issues in the improvements that are made, i.e. storm water pollution, disturbance, etc. Phil Demosthenes agreed and stated that we must be in compliance with Federal law, including NPDES/AZPDES. Bryan Perry mentioned that our rules in Arizona (AZPDES) have requirements for all to follow so no steps are missed. Robert Miller agrees with the importance of the role of environmental and water resources in the manual, especially in regards to permitting. Also, Robert Miller stressed the importance of local monitoring of compliance post-permitting – especially liability risks.

Continuing discussion of the Framework slide, Phil Demosthenes gave examples of how to hold other agencies accountable for potential permit/safety hazards. For example, when a new development will cause traffic at a major intersection near by, this may require the subdivision to get a permit to fix the intersection to accommodate the extra traffic for health hazard reasons. We want to have a goal as local agencies communicating with each other before a safety hazard happens. John Harper noted that some options may have to involve changing laws. Phil Demosthenes gave an example of "wildcat" subdivisions. Bryan Perry mentioned that if you are approving a subdivision, it should have access. If the access is to a state highway, it cannot have it without ADOT permit approval. Phil pointed out that this will not be an "on the shelf" manual – regulations will tie into framework and legal structure.

Rick Ensдорff discussed CCP (Communication and Community Partnerships Group). He and Arnold Burnham are getting more and more MPO meetings, including MAG and other MPOs (COGs throughout the state now through October and November.) CCP is using an on-call consultant to work with local agencies and developer's stakeholder groups to ensure no overlapping and so it's not too confusing.

Moving on to the Next Steps slide (Steps are: Completed District Classifications, Begin Design Guideline review>Create working group, Continue Elected Official briefings, Transportation Board briefing – October 18th), Arnold Burnham commented that the next TAC meeting will be rescheduled for November or early December, after the district meetings are completed. For a Design Guideline Review Group, Arnold will be coordinating putting together a focus group for this and Caraly Foreman will keep you updated on the status and activities regarding this. Caraly Foreman will also update you as to the new dates for the upcoming TAC meetings. Reza Karimvand asked when the Tucson District be done. Rick Ensдорff replied that the Tucson and Safford Districts are done, and also Yuma, they just need to go through District review and then the reports will come out within a couple of weeks.

Robert Miller inquired about the timeframe for putting together the classification categories. Robert Miller asked, "What is reasonable to expect? What is full build-out? Are we looking at potential future new corridors, etc?" He pointed out that it's going to have impact on the project because once we get access it will be very difficult to change. He used I-10 to Tucson as an example. Twenty years ago, we could not have foreseen this. Rick Ensдорff mentioned that local agencies do not just look at build-out and used MAG as an example in their Hassayampa work – looking at the "bigger picture" impacts. Robert Miller commented that he would have to respectfully disagree. ADOT is looking at build-out on Hassayampa and looking out at corridor classifications. Rick Ensдорff responded that we need to realize build-out visions can be constrained versus 20-year planning process. Access point-based on potential is difficult. You can always look back and wish you'd done that. Arnold Burnham added that if this system is set up, a change would require a rigid process to update. Rick Ensдорff commented that land use plans will still be able to change, which will be filtered into this system. The process is to keep looking out in that 20-year period.

Robert Miller voiced a concern about difficulties now because of a 5-year plan. We haven't tried to anticipate. It is much easier to go from a rural to urban than a rural collector to urban major. Using that as our primary, Mike Kondelis used US 93 Hoover Dam as an example. The goal is for controlled access highway. There has to be a funding picture with that. Rick Ensдорff suggested that this may reduce the pain but won't solve all build out issues. This will still be a challenge, but most agencies understand this and we are setting up this process to put a system of partnership and understanding, particularly impacts of land use decisions, in place.

Donna Jones commented that this is "sink or swim" on relationship with local agencies. She inquired as to where we are now and what steps are being taken. Rick Ensдорff replied that we've heard feedback from around the state. There will be some general framework/structures to guide how to work together and noted that Phil Demosthenes will be working on this element. Phil Demosthenes said it will be more guidance than anything. Developers, real estate stakeholders will participate more and come better prepared to get a permit from ADOT as a result of this program, from his experience. Rick Ensдорff concluded by stating this will be a work in progress.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.